

## Defense Tech

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### ARMY PREPS SMART MORTARS

While laser-guided bombs are grabbing headlines in the run-up to Gulf War II, researchers at [Picatinny Arsenal](#) are busy developing precision mortars for future combat.

Traditional mortars can go as much as 70 meters astray, according to Lee Bickley, who runs the PGMM ("[Precision Guided Mortar Munitions](#)") program at Picatinny. Half of these guided weapons will strike within a meter of the target.

"You'll use just one round instead of a hundred... to take out bunkers and light armored vehicles," Bickley says.

PGMMs were one of several munitions, weapons, and fighting vehicles the military displayed for the media today at Picatinny Arsenal, the Army's lone research and development center for armaments and ammunition.

The PGMM rounds will fly about 7 kilometers. And they should be fielded by 2008, Bickley estimates.

More on my Picatinny trip Wednesday on *Wired News*.  
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